(c) the sites where such projects have been implemented and the agencies involved in implementing *in situ* coal gasification projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) has been notified as eligible "end use" for allocation of coal blocks so that participation of private entrepreneurs can also be made in this new technology.

(b) The commercial viability of underground coal gasification in Indian condition,could only be assessed after taking up pilot scale studies. No such studies have so far been carried out in India.

(c)) CIL has entered into an MOU with ONGC to jointly pursue pilot scale study for UCU. Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) in turn has entered into an MOU with Skochinsky Institute of Mining (SIM), Russia for providing technical consultancy in this field. One block namely Kasta in Raniganj coalfield was selected for generation of additional data for considering its suitability for taking up Pilot Scale studies. Action has been taken to generate the requisite data.

A UCG related project with a duration of 4 years, funded jointly under R&D/ S&T grant of Ministry of Coal and Department of Science and Technology has been taken up by Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) in 2005 with an objective of evaluation of exploration data and selection of a Lignite block for UCG trial and carry out Pilot Scale studies and assess heat value of the gas produced. The project is under implementation.

ONGC is associated with NLC and Gujarat Industries Power Company Limited for development of UCG projects in lignite deposits at Rajasthan and Gujarat. Data generation is in progress.

Singareni Collieries Company Limited has also undertaken a study with ONGC for taking up UCG trials. Data generation is in progress.

New coal distribution policy

2457. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to frame a new coal distribution policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In compliance with the Orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court, a Committee was constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Coal) to formulate New Coal Distribution Policy. The Competent Authority has taken a decision on the recommendation of the committee.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply given at (a) and (b) above.